

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS
Special Called Council Meeting
September 22, 1980
6:00 P.M.
Council Chambers
301 West Second Street

The meeting was called to order with Mayor McClellan presiding.

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor McClellan, Councilmembers Cooke, Mullen, Mayor Pro Tem Trevino

Absent: Councilmembers Himmelblau, Goodman, Snell

Mayor McClellan stated that this was a Special Called Meeting for the purposes of:

1. Conducting a public hearing to consider certain fee increases and/or the establishment of new fees for the 1980-81 fiscal year.
2. Considering changing the schedule for consideration of Southern Union Gas Company's rate change.
3. Second and third readings of ordinance establishing a temporary 30-day moratorium on the processing of certain subdivision plat applications covering land within that portion of the Williamson Creek Watershed Aquifer Contributing Recharge Zone beyond being accepted for filing and disapproved.

SOUTHERN UNION GAS COMPANY RATE CHANGE

Councilmember Mullen moved to slide for one week the timetable for consideration of Southern Union Gas Company's Statement of Intent to Change Rates filed on September 2, 1980. The motion, seconded by Mayor McClellan, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Mayor McClellan, Councilmembers Cooke, Mullen, Mayor Pro Tem Trevino
Noes: None
Absent: Councilmembers Himmelblau, Goodman, Snell

At that point, Councilmembers Himmelblau, Snell, and Goodman entered the Council Chambers.

FEE INCREASES AND/OR NEW FEES FOR FY 80-81

Mayor McClellan opened the public hearing scheduled for 6:00 p.m. to consider the following fee increases and/or the establishment of new fees for the 1980-81 fiscal year:

1. Construction Permit Fees
2. Zoning Fees
3. Street Cleaning and Anti-litter Fee
4. Drainage Channel and Storm Sewer Maintenance Fee
5. Commercial Garbage Collection Fee
6. Utility Cut Inspection Fee
7. Container Fees
8. Return Check Fee
9. New Meter Installation Fee
10. Apartment Manager Read and Change Program
11. Reinspection Fee
12. Increased Library Fines
13. ETJ Inspection Fee
14. County Resident Library Card
15. Swimming Fees
16. City Park Fees
17. Lake Walter E. Long Fees
18. Contract Classes Fees
19. Golf Fees
20. Tennis Fees

MS. LEE THOMSON, Budget Director, presented an overview of the proposed fees and stated that the options before the Council were not included in the Charter volume or the Revenue volume of the proposed 1980-81 budget. Fees listed and any additional revenues would be in addition to the figures shown in the fund summaries in the proposed budget.

MR. JOHN MCPHAUL, a developer, spoke in opposition to the shifting of construction permit fees. He described the costs involved in a subdivision which he developed and stated that it was unfair for the purchaser to pay twice when the area was annexed. Costs should be recovered through utility rates.

MR. JIM COWSER, 2104 Rockmoor, spoke in opposition to the proposed increase in the annual ticket fee for swimming. He said that there was no justification for the increases and cited parking fees, shorter time of openings and greater crowds as his reasons. He suggested that a fee be imposed on neighborhood pools.

MR. RAY NEUBAUER, representing Citizens for Responsible Taxation, felt that fees should be paid for by the people who were using the services.

MS. JANE FAGAN objected to the proposed golf fee increases and hoped that the number of employees could be decreased instead of raising recreation fees in general.

In response to Ms. Fagan's question, Mr. Leonard Ehrler said that there were no plans to close Morris Williams golf course from October through February.

Mayor McClellan asked why annual tennis cards were projected to be eliminated and not in golf.

Mr. Ehrler said that there were only about 25 annual cards in tennis and it was more equitable to eliminate them than to increase fees.

Councilmember Snell asked why Austin had to charge more for a round of golf than anywhere else in Texas.

Mr. Ehrler responded that it was the quality of maintenance on Austin's golf courses that set the fees. Other cities did not maintain their courses as well as Austin did.

MR. I.L. HARRIS, 1502 Bellaire Drive, expressed his concerns about property valuations increasing and that it was almost impossible to live here.

MR. JOE ARNETT, 2401 Spring Creek Drive, echoed the views of Ms. Fagan with regard to golf. He felt that the City was overspending somewhere and that some of the spending could be reduced.

MS. RUTH BILLINGSLEY hoped that the fees would not price young golfers off the golf course.

Councilmember Himmelblau stated that she had submitted a question for Mr. Ehrler regarding charging one-half of the annual card fee and then charging the current fee for rounds. She asked for clarification to the response.

Mr. Ehrler replied that his response covered charging one-half of the current fee for the card and then with the card a person would be charged the current greens fee. Revenue projected would be somewhat less than \$71,000. The procedure was followed in some other cities.

Councilmember Himmelblau did not feel that the City had been aggressive in collecting out-of-city fees for use of municipal golf courses and asked that it be corrected. City Manager Davidson said that it would be done.

LEO MUELLER spoke in support of user fees.

MS. JANE FAGAN stated that since she moved to Austin in 1963 the junior golf program had fallen off. She would be willing to pay more to keep junior fees down.

MS. PAT LORISKI, 3306 Clearview Drive, spoke in support of user fees, but questioned the street sweeping fee and other fixed fees.

MS. LOU HARKNESS, member, golf advisory board, asked that golf fees be kept reasonable. She stated that recommendations of the board were not close to the fees being recommended by staff.

City Manager Davidson stated that fees in his recommended budget were the same as fees recommended by the golf advisory board.

MS. KATHLEEN RICH stated that she lived in a duplex and that she and her neighbor accumulated a minimal amount of garbage for the monthly fee. She asked that some consideration be given when the Council acted on the garbage fee.

MR. BO BYERS stated that tennis was the only PARD program which paid its way and he contended that tennis fees should not be increased. He felt that support should come from General Revenue. He felt that an increase in fees would be self-defeating.

MR. GENERAL MARSHALL, 2508 Givens, regarding golf fees, urged the Council to adopt the recommendations of the golf advisory board.

MR. VOLMA OVERTON, 1403 Springdale Road, spoke in opposition to an increase in golf fees and library fees.

MR. JIM COWSER asked if the Council or PARD had considered spreading out the fees for swimming throughout the City to include neighborhood pools.

Mayor McClellan stated that she opposed such a fee for neighborhood pools. Councilmember Goodman agreed with the Mayor.

Councilmember Snell stated that he was against increasing fees at Lake Long. Councilmember Goodman again agreed with Councilmember Snell.

Councilmember Cooke stated that he supported increasing fees at Barton Springs and Lake Long.

MR. COWSER stated that his point was to increase user fees across-the-board and not expect a few facilities to support an entire program.

MS. JUDY SEARCY is opposed to an increase of fees at Barton Springs. he felt that a user fee should be spread across all users of recreational facilities. She said that she was told that Barton Springs made about \$100,000 last year and could be expected to make the same this year. She did not think that Barton Springs should pay for other City facilities.

Mr. Ehrler stated that the pool paid its way and did clear about \$100,000. Other amenities for the area were built into the Zilker Park budget. If all fees at municipal pools currently charging admission were the same as the fees charged at Barton Springs, about \$61,785 in additional revenue would be generated annually.

Councilmember Mullen suggested charging \$1.25 at all of the subject pools.

City Manager Davidson said that new figures would be calculated on the pools.

Mayor McClellan requested that figures be carried on down to include children and student fees.

MR. BO BYERS commented on the ground maintenance costs for the tennis centers. He was told that in the new contract for Pharr Tennis Center private industry would be handling the maintenance.

Motion

Councilmember Mullen moved that the Council close the public hearing on consideration of fee increases and/or the establishment of new fees for the 1980-81 Fiscal Year. The motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Trevino, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers Goodman, Himmelblau, Mullen, Snell, Mayor Pro Tem Trevino, Mayor McClellan, Councilmember Cooke

Noes: None

September 22, 1980

NO ACTION ON MORATORIUM

Mayor McClellan stated that no action would be taken tonight on establishing a temporary 30-day moratorium on Williamson Creek. The item would be placed on next Thursday's Agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Council adjourned its meeting at 7:45 p.m.

APPROVED

Carole Keeton McClellan
Mayor

ATTEST:

Grace Monroe
City Clerk